TEA
A MAGAZINE

Flowering Teas

Tea in Copenhagen

SUMMER 2008

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TEA

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN ROBERTSON

Dedication: As Johann Sebastian Bach dedicated his music (by which I have often sipped tea), I also dedicate this work TGBTG. - Ed.

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Spring sure was busy. I saw many of my peers at the World Tea Expo and got to spend some time with my international colleagues. Mette Marie Sarbo from Denmark brought me some delicious Danish cookies from her tea room in Copenhagen. Kirsten Kristensen writes about her visit to Mette Marie's tea room Tante T in this issue. There's also a tale about *One Hundrerd Years of Tea Whispers* at the Empress in British Columbia. Also featured is an American tea room in northern California—*Ms. Lynn's Tea.*

As you'll read from the story *1st U.S. Auction of Sri Lankan Teas* I'm the proud owner of an award winning tea from the St. James Estate in the Uva region of Sri Lanka. All the monies raised by the auction are going to the aid of children whose lives were devastated by the Tsunami that occurred in 2004. There's still a great need to help these victims. On September 7th The Boston Park Plaza will be hosting a special tea to further the cause. I will be there along with other tea personalities. Of course, they'll be serving the exquisite tea from the St. James Estate.

Peter Goggi reports on the many uses for re-cycled spent tea leaves. *TEA* features the contribution that the Japanese company ITO EN makes in that arena.

We're pleased to introduce many of our readers to the tea-growing region of Azerbaijan. We were delighted to receive that article from N.Vige Bede-Johnpillai, a gentleman I had met in Sri Lanka on my first visit in 2003.

Dan Robertson knows more about flowering teas than anyone I'm acquainted with in the tea world. He has travelled to China many times and will be leading a tour next summer. One of their many stops will be at a small tea factory in which these beautiful tea pieces are handmade. His eloquent prose in *A Visit to the Ballet—Flowering Teas* is sure to educate and entertain.

The book reviews have great summer reading for all ages. I learned so much from Elizabeth Knight's *Celtic Teas With Friends*. There's a great message in the children's book *The Little Teacup That Talked* by Emilie Barnes. Frank Murphy's *The Sprit of Tea* has an introspective look at tea. Now that *Tea Art* has been published the price of these ephemera will be sure to rise.

"The longer I live, the more beautiful life becomes," said Frank Lloyd Wright. That was on a birthday card I received recently. Time is the most precious gift one can give, so celebrate your beautiful life, with others, over a cup of tea.

The China Tea Tour

Tracing the Silk Road

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Join the adventure of a life time as we discover tea's ancient origins and follow its path through history and culture. Guided by tea experts, travel across China to the most important tea areas, visiting tea gardens, factories, museums, markets, trading companies, tea houses, and a research center as well as numerous cultural and scenic spots.

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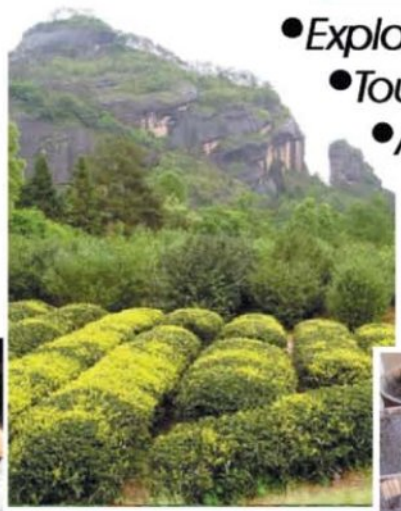

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- *Gain Invaluable First Hand Experience*

Unforgetable sights include: Beijing - Great Wall, Forbidden City; Grasslands of Inner Mongolia; Yunnan - Stone Forest, Ancient Tea Tree; Fujian - Wuyi Mtns., De Hua Porcelain City; Bustling Shanghai; modern Taiwan and many more.

For more information visit www.theteahouse.com

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TEA with Tante T

Mette Marie

Story and photographs
by Kirsten Kristensen

If you are looking for an authentic Danish cultural experience you could not find a better place than visiting Tante T's (Aunt T) tea salon in central Copenhagen, within walking distance of the town hall square. Even though tea served in a tea salon is still a fairly new re-invention in Denmark, Tante T offers the most traditional and delicious Danish cakes and butter cookies you can imagine, and they are even baked by the owner herself!

Together with her brother Mikkel, Mette Marie Sarbo opened her tea salon "Tante T" in August 2006. Mette Marie, or "The Aunt" as she calls herself, spent a semester as a high school exchange student in Minnesota and during a trip to New York developed a dream of opening her own teashop and tea salon.

Photograph courtesy of Tante T.

Mikkel

Mette Marie and Mikkel got the initial experience in the tea business selling teas online and at vendor sales and flea markets. With the help of family and friends Mette Marie made her dream come true on Viktoriagade (Victoria Street) in Copenhagen. Although the street name calls for a tea room in the old-fashioned Victorian style, this is far from what Tante T is about. The salon is a very down to earth, cozy, and relaxing place with décor from garage sales and old family storage from the 1950s. Each table has candle lights, not for romance but for the coziness, and loose tea is served in glass teapots to enhance the experience. Old-fashioned white linen tablecloths and pictures from the 1940-50s, many of them of the Danish royal family, create a post-WWII atmosphere. This is a tea salon where everyone is welcome. Here you will find a corner to meet with friends for a talk. Your boyfriend will relax from the city stress, with mom or just yourself, to reflect on the good things in life.

The tea salon is open every day from 10am to 10pm, (Sunday until 9pm). The late opening hours bring in people on their way home from the theater or movies.

Part of the salon is a tea shop where you can find a huge selection of quality loose teas from all over the world weighed at the counter. To find your favorite, there is a smelling panel on the wall where you are welcome to sniff your way to a choice. The countertop is antique, from around 1900, found at an auction before it went through a lot of TLC from Mette Marie's mother Dorte or Gramma T, who also bakes for the tea salon and who is behind many of the traditional recipes for the cakes and bread.

TANTE T

Viktoriagade 6,
1655 Copenhagen (West)
DENMARK

Tel.+45-3210 3610

www.tante-t.dk

Hours:
Monday-Saturday: 10am – 10pm
Sunday: 10am – 9pm

Tante T has 16 employees, including their sister and mother. Their first two years have been very successful and Mette Marie and Mikkel have plans to open a second tea salon in northern Copenhagen. All breads and cakes are baked in the little kitchen behind the store, and only organic flour and butter are used. "Simply because it tastes better," says Mette Marie. She is a young and dynamic entrepreneur with plenty of enthusiasm and always has a big smile on her face. "I want to learn all there is to know about tea," she says. After her first tea tour to Japan in the autumn of 2007, she went to Las Vegas in the spring of 2008 to attend the World Tea Expo. She stayed on a few extra days in Vegas to receive certification from the Specialty Tea Institute.

Tante T is the proud winner of the Copenhagen competition, "Best Tea Salon of the City" voted by the customers in November 2007. The staff is happy to reserve a table for you if you call at least a day ahead.

If you want to call your tea business, a name that will translate well into several European languages the most obvious is the phonetic letter t. In Danish, it is pronounced "te" which is also the name of the cherished drink. In French it is "thé," and in English of course, "tea." Tante means Aunt, so here you have "Aunt T."

WHITE PORT infused with Black Tea, Rose Petals, and Lavender

by Cynthia Gold
photographs by
Julian Landa

1 bottle of White Port (Dow's Fine White Porto works very nicely)
1/4 cup loose black tea (New Vithanakande) from Sri Lanka
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh rose petals OR 1/4 cup dried rose petals
2 tablespoons fresh lavender petals OR 1 tablespoon dried lavender petals

Place all ingredients together in a glass or stainless steel pitcher. Steep at room temperature to taste. You will probably be very happy with the results at around 45 minutes, but start tasting it a little earlier. The larger the tea leaves, the longer it will take to infuse. Strain well.

The key to making shelf stable tea cocktails is the straining. Use a t-sac™ or several layers of cheesecloth, or a coffee filter to strain the port completely. If you leave any tea residue, the port will over-steep. If you leave any flower petals, they can break down and turn your beautiful clear cocktail cloudy. When properly strained, this port can stay at room temperature for up to 3 months.

If you have difficulty getting food safe rose petals you may substitute a Chinese Rose Congou black tea and skip the petals. But fresh petals really are a lovely touch when available.

MATCHA SHORTBREAD TEA LEAVES

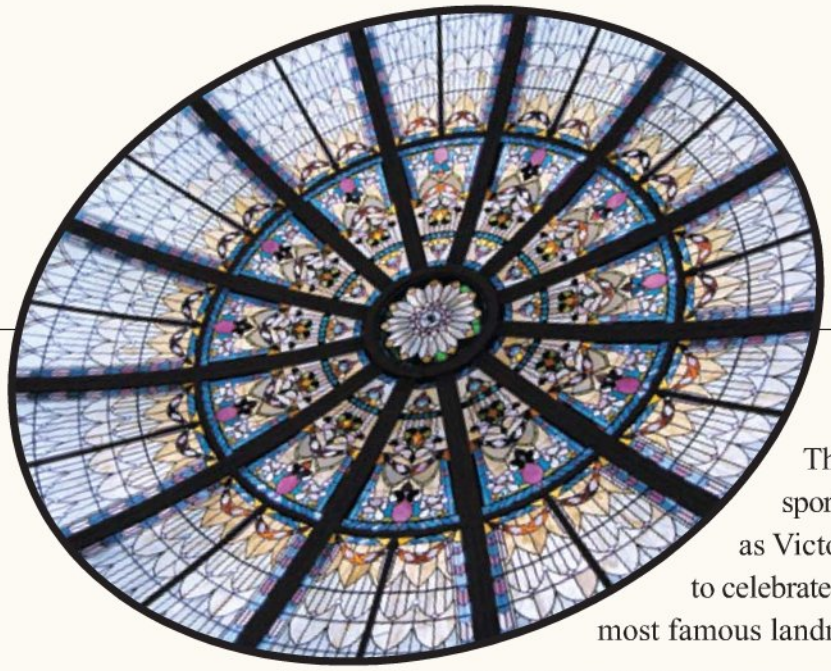
Matcha is the finely ground Japanese green tea used in Cha No Yu, the Japanese Tea Ceremony. The better quality the Matcha, the brighter green the color and the fresher the taste. These same characteristics will carry over to your cookies as well.

1/2 pound unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons matcha powder
1 teaspoon Gran Marnier
1/2 teaspoon Oriental Five Spices
1/4 teaspoon salt

In large bowl of an electric mixer, cream together softened butter and sugar until smooth. Add flour, matcha, 5-spice powder, salt, and Gran Marnier. Blend on low until mixture just pulls together. Roll out thinly (1/8" thick) on parchment paper, place on sheet pan and chill for 20 minutes. With a sharp paring knife, cut into leaf shapes. Transfer shortbread to parchment lined or oiled sheet pan. Score a center vein into the 'tea leaf' very lightly, if desired. Bake at 300° F. until the cookies take on a dry, powdery look, about 15 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack.

Oriental Five Spices is typically a blend of cinnamon, anise, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves.

The Boston Park Plaza Hotel introduced this special tea cocktail on Mothers Day.



One Hundred Years of Tea Whispers

Story and photographs by Gail Henderson

The grand old EMPRESS HOTEL sports a diamond in her crown this year as Victoria, BC rolls out the red carpet to celebrate the one hundredth jubilee of its most famous landmark and tea room.

Serving tea from its very first day to elegant travelers arriving by steamship, this former Canadian Pacific Railroad hotel has heard its share of whispers. In fact, for many years tea was served in the Palm Court, one of the world's few whispering galleries. Under a spectacular stained glass dome, guests were forced to whisper their comments into teacups because normal voice tones carried throughout the room. Today guests waiting under the glass dome before being seated in the Crystal Ballroom must take similar precautions if discussing business secrets.

Early guests taking tea probably whispered about whose hat was largest, indicating whose status was greatest, whether or not the Empress of Victoria steamship was truly only a tad smaller than the Titanic, and why in the world the handsome young architect who had built the lavish hotel was content to marry a domestic. Imagine the whispers when, years later, he divorced his wife and married the hotel's attractive new piano player, thirty years his junior and already thrice married. Although he came to Victoria looking for gold, he unfortunately left with a gold-digger. A shocked society headquartered at the Empress advocated his return to England. How they must have gossiped upon learning of his violent death there and of the trial of his wife's lover accused of his murder.

Later teacup talk was more benign, especially when it concerned the fortunes of the dowagers, wealthy women who began to stay in the Empress when WWI required the services of their maids and gardeners. When the depression wiped out the dowagers' fortunes, the hotel management found a way for them to continue to live there, giving them rooms for $1 a day (without meals) and generally overlooking their demanding nature. The rustling of long-outdated formal evening gowns and imperious voices interrupted paying guests in the dining room and must have spoken volumes about a vanishing era. Kind words must have reigned, because the last dowager was allowed to stay until 1989.

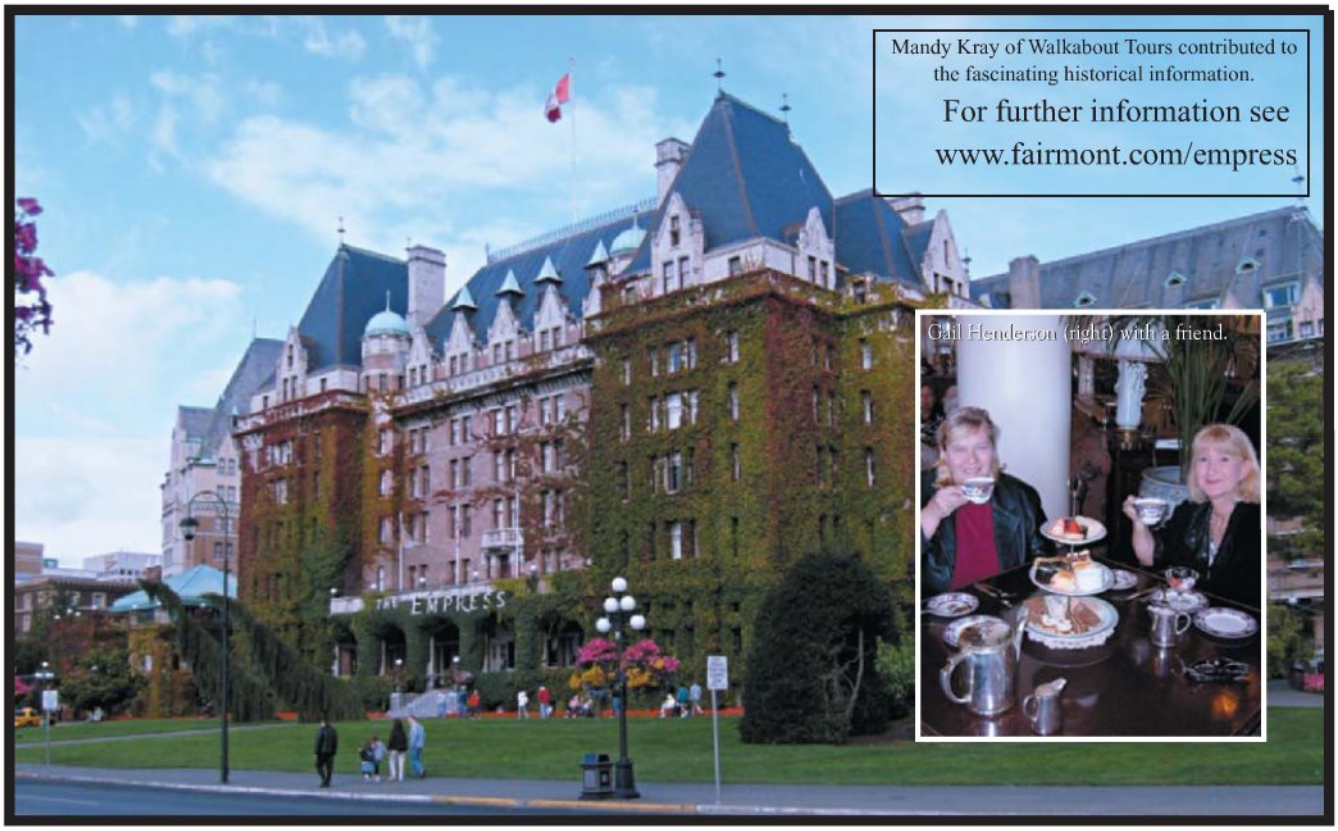
During the 1920's to the 1950's, there was lots of talk about how to survive the thirty-year period of Prohibition in Canada. One might hear whispers ranging from which bellman might be helpful to procure liquor to which silver teapot held the brandy for Winston Churchill's visits!

There were other whispers the Empress could share regarding its more famous visitors…Queen Elizabeth II, Rudyard Kipling, the King and Queen of Siam to name but a few. Wish we could hear the squawking of guests the Christmas of 1931 when they were bumped to accommodate the unexpected 400-person entourage accompanying the King and Queen of Siam! That must have been interesting.

After 1939, Hollywood stars who visited because of wartime filming all experienced afternoon tea at the Empress. The list includes Rita Hayworth, Jack Benny, Pat O'Brien, Katherine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy, Bing Crosby, Ginger Rogers, Shirley Temple, John Wayne, and Bob Hope, the latter two generating some talk. Reportedly, mad scrambling sounds could be heard from the hotel staff whenever John Wayne's yacht was spotted in the harbor, as the staff scurried to hook up no fewer than seven phone lines in his suite. But guests are still chuckling over the private pranks of Bob Hope who regularly booked Suite 530. Perhaps guests in that room can still hear the clink of golf balls, as Bob Hope insisted upon that room because the hallway outside that suite had "the most playable carpets." Later tea takers include Barbara Streisand, Mel Gibson, Joan Lunden, Goldie Hawn, Jason Priestly, Kurt Russell, and others.

As we celebrate the tea takers who have spanned a century, perhaps we should start a few tea whispers of our own. We could join the throng of tea lovers who line up at reserved times in the Fairmont Empress in what feels a little like Grand Central Station. That impression quickly fades upon entrance to the Tea Lobby, however. Graceful palms, elegant sofas and chairs surround the tea tables and the music of the grand piano quickly quiet our spirits. Tea mothers pour and we embark upon a culinary adventure amidst century-old surroundings that is worth the trip!

Just remember that to master the art of tea whispering properly, you must take tea with someone else. Why not a friend? And friendship and tea are known to be so invigorating that perhaps you will celebrate your own diamond jubilee one day!



Mandy Kray of Walkabout Tours contributed to the fascinating historical information.

For further information see www.fairmont.com/empress

Gail Henderson (right) with a friend.

Profile

Yogesh Marimuthu

and

SHANGRI LA
AWARD WINNING TEAS

by Richard Guzauskas

Yogesh Marimuthu, Shangri La's new CEO, comes from a strong line of leaders in the tea industry. Steeped in tea, his family remains key players in today's bustling tea industry as directors, owners, CEO's, and estate managers of some of the world's best-known tea conglomerates. In addition to his tea background, Yogesh has a BS in Computer Science, an MBA, and has worked as a technology consultant. He brings a wealth of experience to the southern California based Shangri La Tea Co., and has employed the guidance of some of the specialty tea industry's most seasoned professionals.

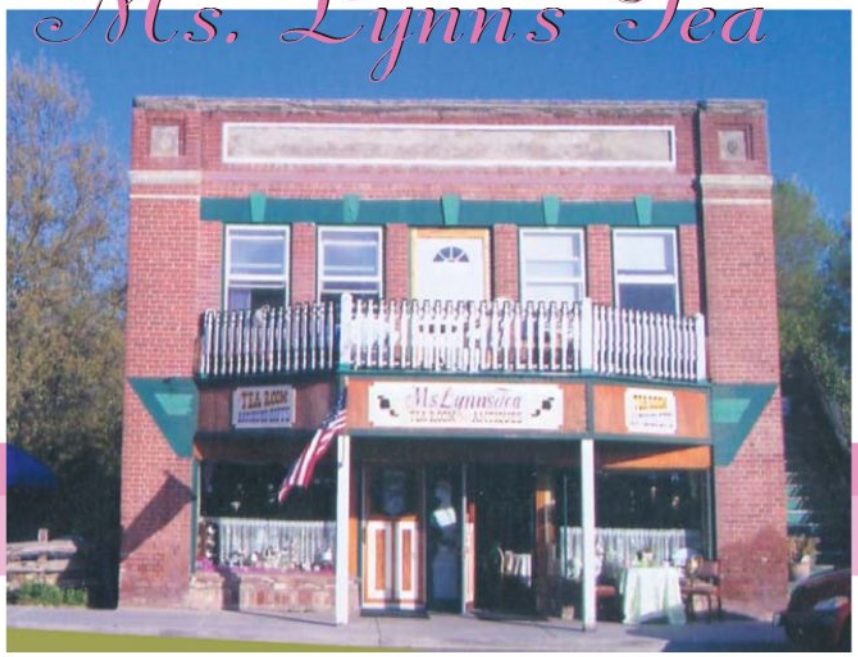
The company is aware that Shangri La is not alone in producing and offering fine specialty teas. "There are many excellent choices out there," says Yogesh Marimuthu. "We offer what we feel is noticeably different. We continually strive to be more innovative, and maintain a quality mouthfeel often lost in flavored or iced teas. We're very excited about our products, the look we've created, the people we've teamed up with, and the industry in general."

Organics are at the core of many of the new and healthful blends targeted to appeal to the younger generation. Chocolate Coconut Decadence and Organic Pomegranate Melon Green Tea are only a few of its recent introductions.

A pioneer in flavored iced teas and leader in specialty organic teas, hot and iced, Shangri La has been supplying fine teas for nearly 20 years. In addition to their many awards, two of their iced organic green teas took first place in the competion at the World Tea Expo 2008. With a mother company well known for its fine tea gardens, factories, and tea packaging facilities, Shangri La is set to make an even bigger splash.

www.shangrilateaco.com

Ms. Lynn's Tea



Photographs courtesy of Ms. Lynn's Tea.

For a small town in northern California, Montague appears to have a wealth of history along with a charming tea room, Ms. Lynn's Tea. From your seat near the window you may be fortunate to see the *Blue Goose*. That's a train that operates during the summer months from the neighboring town of Yreka. In late September you may look out the window and see a hot air balloon, or a parade passing by. If you're nearby in June you may even witness the train being robbed during The Montague Festival.

When Charlynn Long was a young girl, her grandmother Doris introduced her to the niceties of tea. After a career as an occupational thereapist, Charlynn opened her tea room in 2003. It seems that she still gives thereapy, but in a much different way. A sign posted near the register reads, "We provide a special place in time where grownups can be children and children can be grownup."

Using local organic produce, a fixed lunch includes soup, salad, soufflé, or croissant sandwich, and a pot of tea. The tea list has the usual English and Irish Breakfast teas, Earl Grey, and an extensive range of flavored teas, and herbal infusions. Homemade lemon curd with fresh hot scones is always available and may even be ordered to go. Reservations are required for afternoon tea. The Fairy Kingdom room may be reserved for private parties where there's a selection of dress up items for a prince or princess.

Other tea room owners have given praise to the excellent service and food at Ms. Lynn's—a five star review. Some guests have remarked on how much fun they've had. Along with the classical music, Ms. Lynn is pleased to hear the laughter of her guests as they enjoy teatime.

The tea room holds special events each month, but with limited seating (only 27) planning ahead is essential. And then again, if you happen to be on Interstate 5 and decide to take a detour for those hot scones and lemon curd, Ms. Lynn and her staff will find it a privilege to serve you.

In the Fairy Kingdom

Above: Proprietress Charlynn Long (second from the right), with faithful employees Ali, Chrissie, and Patricia.

ROSE PETAL CUPCAKES

Cupcakes

8 tablespoons (one stick) butter, softened
1/2 cup fine sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons rose water or rose oil extract
1 tablespoon milk
1-1/4 cup self-rising flour
1/4 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 400° F.

Line a muffin pan with paper baking cups.

Beat together sugar and butter until fluffy.

Add the eggs in two additions.

Stir in flavorings and milk.

Fold in the flour.

Spoon into baking cups.

Bake cupcakes 12-15 minutes, or until they are golden brown.

Transfer to a wire rack and let cool.

Frosting

6 tablespoons butter, softened
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
rose water
pink food coloring
pink colored sprinkles

Beat together confectioners' sugar and butter until fluffy.

Add enough rose water to make the frosting a good spreading consistency.

Add food coloring if you wish. Frost the cooled cupcakes and decorate with sprinkles.

Makes 1 dozen cupcakes.

Ms. Lynn's Tea

120 N. 11th Street
Montague, California 96064

Tel: (530) 459-3439

www.mslynnstea.com

Hours:

Wed-Sun 10-4

Re-cycling and Tea

by Peter F. Goggi

When one thinks of tea, many things come to mind, such as, its great taste, the number of varieties, the countries in which it is grown, its healthful properties, etc. Lately, tea has also begun to lead the way in sustainable agriculture. Several growers around the world have been audited and approved by the Rainforest Alliance in meeting all its criteria. Much work has been done by many growers and packers to create better lives for all that are involved in the growing, manufacturing, packing, selling, and consumption of this great product.

Many efforts are also seen AFTER consumption of tea, that is, a number of ways of re-using tea are being employed globally. One of the simplest ways to re-cycle tea is to mix the used leaf with your potting soil as mulch. Tea is noted as a real help in driving color development in flowers, particularly those of the red varieties.

Want to keep your home plumbing smelling fresh? Just put your used tea bags (after removing the strings and tags) or your used loose leaf in the garbage disposal in your sink. Let sit for awhile and then run your disposal.

You'll be happy to know that large companies also re-use tea. For example, after extraction, tea leaves used to make instant teas are subsequently used as cattle feed. On tea estates, waste tea from the factories is used in the fields as mulch and natural fertilizer.

When one browses the web, even more surprising uses are evident. One website (www.teanobi.com/tradition/other.html) talks of the following: Cleaning of Carpet and Flooring, Protecting your cast-iron pots and pans from rusting, re-using tea leaves in your bath, and cleaning your cutting board.

The internet provides numerous sites for information on these and other re-cycling and sustainability efforts including some packaging ideas. Here are just a few:

www.unilever.com/ourvalues/environmentandsociety/

www.rainforestalliance.com/programs/agriculture/certified-crops/tea.html

blog.yayateahouse.co.nz/2007/10/15/green-innovations-12-ways-to-recycle-used-tea-leaves/

www.itoen.com/resources/CorporateResponsibility_Environment.cfm

www.terracycle.net/dpb/dpb.htm

REMEMBER! Tea is good for you while you drink it. It can even be good to us and our environment after we drink it!

–Ed. To our readers: Peter F. Goggi is the director of tea buying at Lipton and president of Royal Estates Tea, a division of Lipton. If you would like Mr. Goggi to answer any question(s) you may have about tea, please write to:

Peter F. Goggi
TEA A MAGAZINE
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Scotland, CT 06264
or email us at:
teamag@teamag.com

Cookie Jar Memories

by Eve Hill

Coming home from school as a child and heading to the cookie jar in the kitchen is a favorite childhood memory for many of our readers. A cookie jar was synonymous with home for a generation of children. Mothers were mostly at home during the day and there was time for baking cookies. Grandmothers had cookie jars too, and sometimes there was a special treat of cookies with a cup of tea for a grandchild, giving a memorable introduction to a child's version of afternoon tea.

If you drink tea in America, you may keep a cookie jar with sweet treats in it to go with your afternoon cuppa or have memories of one from your childhood. Cookies in the U.S. are the same item as biscuits in the UK. What Americans denote as biscuits are related to United Kingdom scones and are not cookies.

In a recent issue of *TEA*, we discussed the origin and history of biscuit barrels. A biscuit barrel is the antecedent of the cookie jar and holds similar items, edible little sweet snacks that pick up a day wondrously along with a cup of good tea. Though a biscuit barrel has more elegance, the American cookie jar is a newer item and seems to have come along at a time when comfort was needed. What is considered the first cookie jar, as opposed to the more formal biscuit barrel, was made in Ohio by Brush Pottery in Zanesville. The Great Depression was just starting about the time this lidded green stoneware container with "Cookies" embossed on it went into production. Cookies were synonymous with comfort and it sold well. Other potteries followed suit and the cookie jar became a kitchen necessity in many homes.

The idea of a stoneware container that had to be opened to check the contents was very different from the English glass jar that provided an instant glimpse into it. Perhaps the added mystery of putting a small hand inside and feeling a cookie there appealed to children and to the adults who stocked the jar. Maybe it was often whimsical shapes that pottery artists designed for these containers that made them so popular. For a small price, a decorative piece could be part of the kitchen. Animals, nursery rhymeshapes, fruits, vegetables, characters of all sorts soon became cookie jar designs. Commercial designs, some of which were giveaways or sales premiums, were designed and these were popular. In the Depression years any cheerful design brightened a kitchen and most of these colorful containers were priced quite affordably in stores such as Sears or Montgomery Ward and often were sold at Five & Dime stores or given as premiums by grocers after a particular amount of money was spent over a period of time. Sometimes they were made to match sets of stoneware kitchen accessories, as in Hull's Little Red Riding Hood line. Brush, Shawnee Pottery, Metlox, Roseville Pottery, Hall, McCoy, Abingdon, and others made designs that collectors now look for. Seasonal and holiday jars are fun to have and old ones can be found yet.

Previous to Andy Warhol's collecting, prices were very reasonable for most cookie jars, but when his collection of flea market obtained cookie jars were auctioned in 1987, the market went totally askew with what most collectors thought were outrageous prices. It has finally calmed in the ensuing two decades, but prices are still high enough for some rare cookie containers that some of the best are being reproduced or faked. Even a relatively new one such as the Keebler Hollow Tree jar is being copied in cheap reproductions. Be very careful about purchasing, especially from online auctions, if you decide to buy a collectible cookie jar. Getting some advice from a seasoned collector about the particular jars you think you may want is wise. There are reputable national collector clubs and many have local chapters. Do some research and learning before you buy, but if you are at a garage sale and find a bargain for a tiny sum, go ahead and get it. If you check it out later and discover it is only worth about what you paid, you are still ahead because of the sheer pleasure of finding and having a place to put your tea cookies.

Tea Story from Azerbaijan!

From my front balcony a snow-covered peak that marks the border with Dagestan is visible on clear mornings and if you look to the east and south, one sees the rolling plains fade off into the Georgian grape land. Azerbaijan is in the center of a wide array of historical and cultural affairs. Those influences have dug their way into all facets of life. Most of the day-to-day interrelations in my working environment are in Azerbaijani, translated by the Project Officer. It is rare for a conversation to pass without a smattering of the Russian, Talish, and Avari languages. Throw in the vast deposits of oil in the Caspian, and this becomes a truly dynamic place.

I have been working in Azerbaijan for the German Technical Corporation as a consultant in their Private Sector (TEA) Development Programme for more than 36 months. I lived the first 18 months in a small town in the northwest part of the country. This region, called Zagatala, is well known for its cool climate, fresh air, abundance of hazelnuts and walnuts, and the enormous mountains that seem to hover over the city. Very few Azerbaijanis know of this very attractive and lucrative tea plantation settlement along the forest on the way to the border town of Balakkan.

Currently, I work and live in the southern city of Lankoran, where most of the tea was grown during the Soviet era. The Lankoran region possesses rich flora and fauna. Talish woods are known around the world for their relict and endemic trees. Iron tree, azat, silky acacia, oak, cork tree, velvet birch, and nil trees are identifiable in the woods. The region is an important agricultural zone and is famed for Japanese persimmon, feijoa, lemon, tangerine, and its winter and spring vegetables. But,the main product is tea.

The work I do is in support of factory directors and personnel as well as the small tea farmers. I train them in modern agricultural practices and endeavor to initiate advisory programs in the improvement of the production process. I calculate the economic feasibility of tea production and discuss the results with them. I organize workshops which focus especially on field activities and the organizational preparations needed. I've set up a large tea nursery and have undertaken a study tour to Sri Lanka with farmers, factory directors, and government officials. I've assisted in the forming of farmer associations in all three tea-growing regions—Lankoran, Astara, and Zagatala, and have written a 'field guide,' quarterly bulletins, and advisory circulars. My biggest challenge to date has been to set a high standard in the art of harvesting a good leaf! Some improvements have been made, but the majority of farmers are not yet focusing on quality standards. This is causing damage to the tea bushes and the situation will worsen if not arrested soon.

Story and photographs by N.Vige Bede-Johnpillai

ABOVE RIGHT: Studying the 'field guide' on location.
CENTER RIGHT: Sowing tea seeds.
BOTTOM LEFT: Teaching the fine art of plucking two leaves and a bud.

With Azerbaijan gaining independence in 1992 all tea lands owned by the government were divided amongst the peasant farmers. These transactions, in most instances, were done in an unusual manner only to be understood by the Azerbaijanis themselves. The 'land' was distributed to some influential person in the city and the tea bushes and other crops were allocated to the farmer. Most farmers/workers are women, which makes it a challenge to rehabilitate the tea lands. Yet, I have found them to be willing workers and quick learners. The heavy work of manual pruning was almost always undertaken by men. With the introduction of pruning machinery, their tasks are done more easily and efficiently. It is no wonder that I have made many friends here!

Eight million people populated Azerbaijan, but about two million of them now work in Russia, Turkey, and other Caucasus countries. Of the remaining six million, an estimated three million live in the capital city, Baku.

Being land-locked on most of its borders and having the Caspian Sea, which itself is land-locked, as the remaining boundary, Azerbaijan is dependant on good relations with neighboring states for her import/export trade.

Drinking tea is no doubt a great tradition and pastime in Azerbaijan. 18,000 tons of tea per annum is imported, much of it of Sri Lankan origin. Travelling around, one cannot miss the ever-popular male dominated chayhanas (tea houses) in every city, town, and village.

During the time of the USSR, the tea supplied to Azerbaijan was mostly BOP (Broken Orange Pekoe) type from the high grown areas of Sri Lanka. In the initial years of the formation of the Commonwealth Independent States, however, there was dependence on Turkey to obtain tea supplies. This dependence and influence brought about a qualitative change in the type of tea consumed in Azerbaijan, from high grown BOP to low grown semi-leaf and pekoe type teas which have quite different liquoring characteristics. Furthermore, the introduction of flavors (aromatization) into the tea became accepted.

There is some production of tea in Azerbaijan, mainly carried on from Soviet times. Although Azerbaijan's climate is primarily temperate, there are areas considered subtropical. Tea has been cultivated in these selected areas from the late 19th century. However, the more commercial cultivations were established in 1932–33. The first processing factory was built in Lankoran in 1937.

In 2006 approximately 270 tons of black tea was produced in Azerbaijan, mainly in the southeastern districts of Lankoran and Astara. In 2007, 400 tons of black tea was expected to have been produced. The country has three large tea packing plants in Azersun, Baku, and Lankoran. The latter factories are joint ventures with Turkish interests. The products of these plants dominate the Azeri tea market. These plants import, blend, flavor, and package teas for distribution throughout Azerbaijan. The joint ventures are also now involved in the processing of tea in Azerbaijan. Most of this tea is blended with imported tea. A small quantity is sold as a pure Azeri product.

Living here in Azerbaijan has been an incredible experience. I have met countless people who have never seen a 'dark skinned' person, let alone a Sri Lankan. I have had conversations with people in sign language, with little bits of Azeri, and through an interpreter about all kind of topics, ranging from tea, the tsunami, to Tiger rebels!

I will feel sad to leave this rugged yet beautiful country. Many challenges and difficult situations were faced and overcome. I am pleased with the results that were achieved over the past four years. A good plantation manager can do almost any type of management work. However, a 'Ceylon Planter' is at his best in the environment he loves most as I make my way home.

N.Vige Bede-Johnpillai has over 33 years of experience in the tea plantation sector in Sri Lanka; working on plantations in the Uva and Western Regions of the country. He commenced his planting career with London Private Companies, thereafter with state owned plantation enterprises, and privatized plantation companies. He has served on prestigious plantations such as Haputale Estate, St.Clair's Estate, Poonagalla Estate, and the Dambatenne Estate, once owned by Sir Thomas Lipton.

ITO EN

Pioneers in R E

Did you know that used tea leaves are being utilized to manufacture paper, cardboard boxes, pens, plaster boards, mat boards, even Japanese tatami mats? The list goes on to include even park benches and vending machines. Antibacterial and deodorizing properties of used green tea are retained in producing synthetic resin.

ITO EN, the world's largest green tea supplier with a subsidiary in the United States sells TEAS' TEA and Oi Ocha in the mainstream and natural markets. The spent tea leaves used from their bottling of ready-to-drink teas, are recycled.

The majority of the leaves are returned to the earth as a natural fertilizer. Several tons are likewise used in natural animal feed.

In conjunction with other companies, ITO EN has developed:

- *Chahaigo* board, widely used in *tatami* mats, popular in Japan.
- *Chahaigo* resin, which can be used in products like vending machines and public benches.
- Plasterboard containing used tea leaves.

Bench made from re-cycled tea leaves.

CYCLING *Tea Leaves*

ITO EN has extended this green ethic to how it brings its products to its customers. To ensure effective distribution, their company operates a fleet of over 2,800 commercial vehicles. To help reduce the pollution caused by this fleet, they have set and met successive goals to lower greenhouse gas emissions by converting its vehicles to more environmentally friendly alternatives. Currently, they have added both natural gas and hybrid vehicles to its fleet.

Through continual research and strategic actions like these, it is their goal to help the purveying of green tea an even greener activity.

We, at *TEA*, applaud the contribution that ITO EN has made to ease global warming with their new technology and product development.

Board made from re-cycled tea leaves.

ITO EN has received awards from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for the efforts in developing eco-friendly products from used tea leaves.

Read further: www.itoen.com

A Visit to the Ballet

Flowering Teas

Story and photographs by Dan Robertson

Brocade of Flowers in its brewed and unbrewed states.

Places everyone!

The maestro's arms rise... the music starts...
colorful characters begin to swirl about...

Flamboyant hues, once hidden, suddenly emerge. Players reveal their talents for our pleasure as the fragrance of spring blooms and our thirst is quenched by a marvelous performance. Yesterday it was "Morning Sun Rising in the East." Today we behold "Beauty Gazing into Autumn Waters." Rather than tu-tus and toe shoes it's crystal teapots and tumblers. The maestro is the tea maker. The music is the suspenseful whistle from the kettle and the dancers are small bundles of tender tea leaves. They are curiously shaped, artistically hand-tied clusters of flavorful leaves and buds combined with vibrant flower blossoms. Performance teas, also known as blooming, blossoming, or flowering teas, are a marriage of tea and art and are the latest craze in the world of tea.

Lady Fairy, Seven Brothers, Osmanthis Aroma

Flowering Teas

Red Sea in its brewed and unbrewed states.

Tea leaves compressed into unique shapes like bricks, bowls, disks, and cones have been around for centuries. Today, there are dozens of performance teas, and new ones are being created all the time. Tying leaves together to form flower-like or spherical objects emerged in the 1980s. The inspiration for them, however, originated many years ago. Originally consisting of just tea leaves and/or buds, some early examples of these *gong yi cha* or art-craft teas are Green Peony *(Lu Mudan)* and Green Lychee *(Lu Lizi)* from eastern coastal Fujian and Guangdong provinces and southwestern Yunnan province in China. Well known for quality tea leaves, central Anhui province soon joined the list. These teas, wakened by water, slowly bloom into their final form. Because they are made of whole leaves and are tied densely together, it is common to brew 4-6 infusions from the same piece. In fact, all of the choreography may not be revealed in the first "act."

Ten to fifteen years ago one could find a solitary chrysanthemum or clover flower attached to the center of the flattened flower shape. With the addition of these other elements, we no longer just enjoy the taste of the tea leaves but the combination of the flowers'

essence as well. There is also the factor of the medicinal properties of certain flowers. Chrysanthemum, for example, is a staple in traditional Chinese medicine, being used as a liver tonifier, and for clearing the blurry vision of tired eyes.

The first artistic combination of tea, with flowers revealed only upon infusion, was developed in the Yellow Mountain area of Anhui province and in Fuding county of Fujian. The original one was Brocade of Flowers *(Jinshan Tianhua)* which uses the shape of the Green Peony but has a little bump of folded green leaves in the center. When infused in a tall glass, the bump would slowly open and three small Chrysanthemum flower buds would emerge and suspend one above another. Like fireworks in a glass, the idea soon spurred development of shapes such as Treasure of the Sea *(Haibei Tuzhu)* and Snow Lotus *(Zhuhai Xuelan)*, both of which incorporated Chrysanthemum and Plum Blossom buds.

In traditional Chinese manner, other creative people have taken the idea and developed their own styles. Using flowers like lotus, clover, osmanthus, jasmine, chrysanthemum, globe amaranth, lily and rosebuds, there is a seemingly endless influx of clever and fascinating shapes.

Flowering Teas

Morning Sun in its brewed and unbrewed states.

Production volumes from the Yellow Mountain area soon exceeded the others and they have remained the primary source for the green tea and flower combinations. The scenting of the leaves or buds has developed into another style. With its well-liked and aromatic fragrance, jasmine is one of the most popular elements incorporated in the newer scented performance teas. Fuding, in northeastern Fujian province, is well known for jasmine scented teas and many of the creations come from there. Many of these use tender white tea buds rather than more mature green leaves.

The price and quality of these drinkable works of art can vary greatly, depending on the choice of flower and the variety of tea selected. White tea buds have a more delicate characteristic when compared to the more plentiful, full-bodied green tea. The white teas produce a lighter colored liquor which makes viewing the performance easier. Fujian is famous for black teas; therefore, it's no wonder that local tea-artists began using black teas in their creations. The taste is perhaps more familiar to Western tea drinkers and the liquors are a traditional amber-red to dark brown. This makes the flowers less visible but the second and third infusions offer a pleasing, light golden colored liquor.

When it comes to preparation, the vessel of choice is certainly one made of clear glass. Whether using a teapot, pitcher, or tumbler you are sure to have a good view of the show. Simply place one piece in your teapot and add 8-10 oz of water. Use fresh water brought to just under a boil for green and white teas and boiling for black teas. Some sources recommend a quick washing first, which also starts the rehydration process. Having placed one piece into your vessel, pour just enough water to cover the shape. Add the water slowly to avoid cracking a non-tempered vessel. Appreciate the emanating aroma and then gently pour off the liquid. Again pouring fresh water, add about 8-10 ounces. Steep for 2-3 minutes and pour into teacups, draining the teapot completely. The flowers may not have fully emerged, but the tea is ready to drink. When you are ready for the second act, slowly add fresh hot water and add 30-60 seconds to the brewing time.

These blooming spectacles may be used as beautiful centerpieces—steep a piece or two until the flowers have fully blossomed. Carefully pour off the liquor and add tepid water to the top of your vase, bottle, or glass teapot.

Lady Fairy in its brewed and unbrewed states.

As the curtain falls on the conclusion of the ballet, pause to appreciate the dance, the art and the skill that have combined to create the performance. You may find yourself a regular patron of the ballet of the leaf.

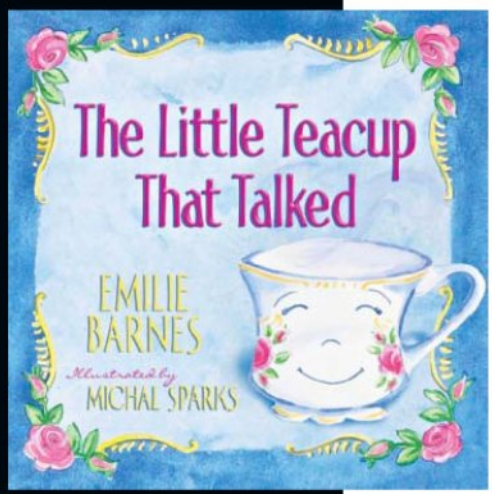
The China Tea Tour advertised on page 3 will be visting a factory that makes flowering teas.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LITTLE TEACUP THAT TALKED

by Emilie Barnes, illustrated by Michal Sparks
Harvest House Publishers, 2008
ISBN: 978-0-7369-2009-4
Hard cover $12.99

Reviewed by Lydia E. Harris



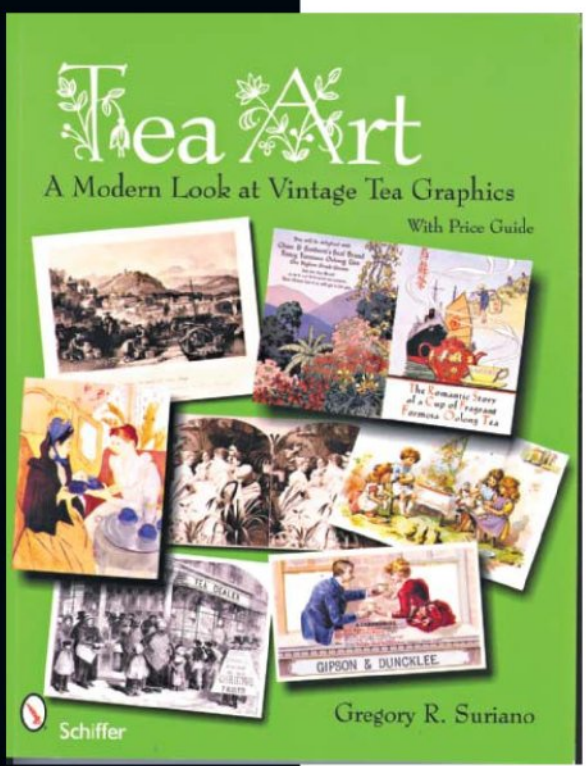
Emilie Barnes has now teamed up with artist Michal Sparks to create *The Little Teacup That Talked*, a charming book for children.

The tale begins when a grandmother and grandfather go shopping for the perfect birthday gift for their granddaughter. The grandmother finds a beautiful teacup and shows it to her husband. To their surprise, the teacup begins telling the story of how it was created from a gray, shapeless slab of clay. The process took a long time, but the little teacup trusted the potter throughout each step. Now it stood on the shelf, a lovely teacup.
Although the grandmother notices a little chip in the cup, the grandfather still thinks it's the right gift. Remembering his own times of feeling broken, he realizes God used the chips and cracks in his life to make him into the person God created him to be.

The Little Teacup That Talked stirs the imagination and blends in a healthy scoop of trusting God. Written at a reading level for ages 9-12 and only 32 pages long, it makes a quick read. Consider this endearing story with colorful illustrations as a gift for a child or even for an adult who needs a cup of encouragement.

TEA ART—A Modern Look at Vintage Tea Graphics

by Gregory R. Suriano
Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 2008
ISBN: 978-0-7643-2811-4
soft cover $24.99



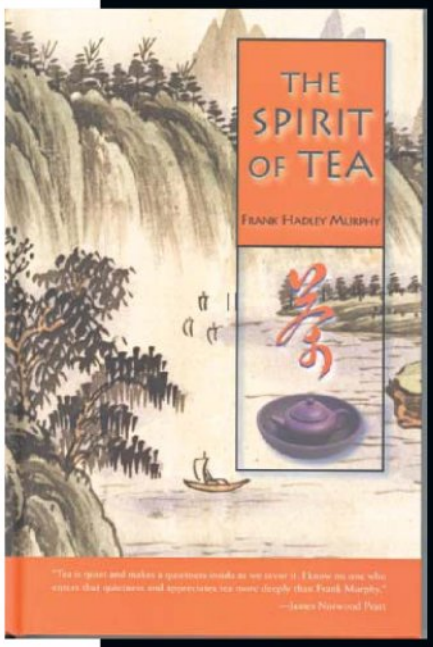
Tea Art is an engaging colorful and informative exploration of images of the world of tea.

Within its pages we find prints, posters, periodical and book illustrations, sheet music, trade and trading cards, postcards, advertisements, labels and packaging, paper collectibles, and a useful value guide to vintage tea graphics.

Tea Art in short, is a most pleasurable read, and one that is likely to lure one back time after time.

THE SPIRIT OF TEA

by Frank Hadley Murphy
Sherman Asher Publishing, 2008
ISBN: 978-1-890932-35-0
Hard cover $21.95

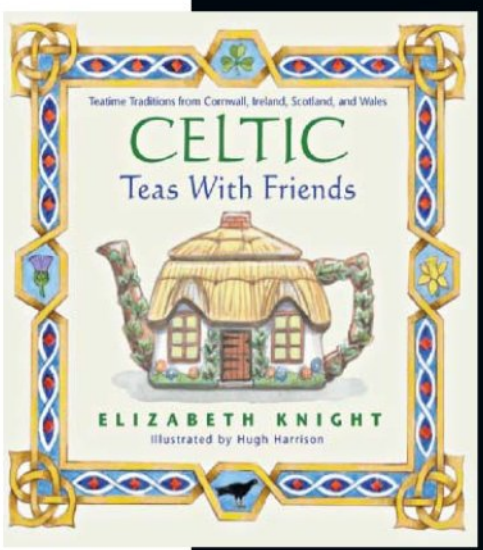


Some may say that Frank Murphy himself is steeped in tea. He feels it, is sensitive to it, mediates on it, and become one with the wholeness of tea. His life has been changed by tea and his book *The Spirit of Tea* shows complete reverence for this venerable beverage and leaf.

Whether or not one approaches tea as Frank does his prose and poetry along with poetry from long ago Chinese poets, invites the reader to a wrinkle in time, where the gentle cast of characters from the Camellia Sinensis family tell their story through him.

CELTIC TEAS WITH FRIENDS

by Elizabeth Knight, illustrated by Hugh Harrison
Benjamin Press, 2008
ISBN: 978-0-9793431-3-1
Hard cover $19.95



Did you know the Scots invented the tea room? In fact, many long-established tea customs originated in Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, and Wales. Inspired by her ancestral roots, Elizabeth Knight, an authority on tea and entertaining, explores Celtic teatime traditions in the second title of her popular *Tea with Friends* series, *Celtic Teas with Friends*.

Celtic Teas with Friends is a beautifully illustrated month-by-month tea party planning guide drawn from both time-honored and contemporary Celtic celebrations. Both elegant and practical, each of the thirteen unique party plans includes colorful historical anecdotes, menus, recipes, decorating tips, music ideas, and activity suggestions to make each festive event unforgettable. This helpful book provides everything needed to create a warm and memorable tea party rich with Celtic hospitality.

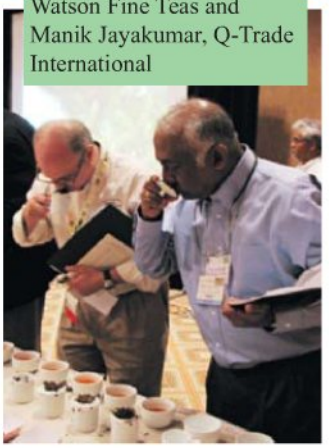
Pearl Dexter

Anil Cooke - Asia Siyaka Commodities (Pvt) Ltd.

Reported by Pearl Dexter

Photographs by
Julian Landa and
Pearl Dexter

Jem McDowall, Universal Commodities (Tea) Trading, Inc.



Ken Rudee, Barnes & Watson Fine Teas and Manik Jayakumar, Q-Trade International

Left to right: Tony Tellin, Tazo Tea Company, Devan Shah, International Tea Importers, Gerry Vandergrift, Metropolitan Tea Company, and Mim Enck, The East Indies Tea Company.

1st U.S. Auction of Sri Lankan Teas

Tea Auction raises money for Tsunami affected children in Sri Lanka

Having made two magical trips to the "pearl of the Indian Ocean" in 2004 and 2007, I am acquainted with several Sri Lankan tea estates. Lumbini, Pedro, Delmar, and Kirkoswald are names that I know, and they were among the more than 40 finalists in the Ceylon Specialty Tea of the Year 2008 held on June 1st at the World Tea Expo in Las Vegas. They had been pre-selected from hundreds of entries received by the Sri Lanka Tea Board. Together with the Specialty Tea Institute, the tea board sponsored this event at which a panel of judges evaluated and tasted teas from the seven major regions in Sri Lanka—Nuwara Eliya, Dimbula, Uva, Uda Pussellawa, Kandy, Ruhuna, and Sabaragamuwa.

The first auction in the United States of Sri Lankan tea took place following the judging. Two teas were put up for auction. The balance of the teas will be auctioned through the regular auction system in Colombo.

So, as the bidding began and the energetic auctioneer Anil Cooke kept a spirited audience on the edge of their seats who would have guessed that I would take an active role in the bidding. I was there, after all, to observe and report on this event, not to engage in the bidding. But when I learned that the money raised at this auction would be donated to the tsunami affected children in Sri Lanka, I found myself raising my hand bidding against corporate giants. Caught up in the moment, I became the recipient of the first Sri Lankan tea auctioned on U.S. soil. The tea was high grown on the eastern slopes of Sri Lanka's central mountains on the St. James Estate. When the auctioneer's hammer came down, I was the proud owner of 50 kilos of fine OP (orange pekoe) tea. There was excitement in the crowd as they started the bidding on the next tea, New Vithanakande, a low grown tea from the Sabaragamuwa region. The tea buyers were well acquainted with this estate. I watched and listened eagerly, but did not raise my hand again. After several minutes of animated bidding by three competitors, Gerry Vandergrift of Metropolitan Tea in Toronto, Canada walked away with the prized New Vithanakande tea.

Revenue from the U.S. auction, when combined with the proceeds raised at the Colombo auction, will bring much needed relief to the victims of the tsunami in Sri Lanka.

Overall winners

Low & Medium Grown Category
New Vithanakande Ex. Special
(Sabaragamuwa Region)

High Grown Category
St. James OP
(Uva Region)

Green Tea Category
Melfort Gunpowder

Overall runner-ups

Low & Medium Grown Category
Pothotuwa Ex. Special
(Ruhuna Region)

High Grown Category
Samia FBOP1 (tie)
Glen Alpin FBOP1 (tie)
(Uva Region)

Green Tea
Ceylon Company
Soumee

Regional Winners

New Vithanakande
Pothotuwa
Imboolpitiya
Norwood
Delmar
Pedro
St. James
Melfort

Runner-up

Houpe
Lumbini
Imboolpitiya
Kirkoswald
Gampaha
Pedro
Glen Alpin
Ceylon Company
Soumee

2nd Runner-up

St. Andrews
Diyagama West
Court Lodge
Samia

Left to right: Joseph Simrany, president of Tea Association of the U.S., Pearl Dexter, Anil Cooke, and Gerry Vandergrift.

afternoon Tea and Misdemeanors

by Patricia L. Crawford

I'm a fairly normal southern Californian, which is to say, not normal at all, but I do seem to fit into my surroundings. I teach high school, I shop at the local grocery store, and I drive a car suitable to my station. Outwardly, I seem no different than the other middle-aged matrons in my working-class neighborhood. I manage to muddle along quite well, at least until I am overtaken by a secret vice so dark and profound that I cannot rest until I satisfy my obsession: I am addicted to taking afternoon tea.

I don't know where this problem comes from. No one else in my family has displayed this weakness. I can't even claim genetic memory, as part of my family is German, another is Cherokee, and the rest are 100% hillbilly. Their idea of tea is glass after glass of a noxious, southern-inspired sugar-thickened brew served over cloudy cubes of tap-water ice. Why did I turn out so differently?

I'm ashamed to say that no one understands me. When my family had a reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada, everyone drifted from casino to casino like haunting wraiths, lured by the jingle of quarters and the siren's song of the slot machines. I had already made my reservations two days earlier, sneaking out to use the telephone without any witnesses, and chose the Bellagio. I happily forked over a sizable portion of my meager teacher salary for pots of jasmine tea and platter after platter of items covered with cream and curd. I was gloriously alone, and didn't have to share. Oh, the shame of it all.

I have travelled to many places, some exotic and some not, to satisfy my addiction. From the Mandarin Oriental in Bangkok, to the Heathman Hotel in Portland, Oregon, to the Huntington Library Rose Garden Tea Room in my own state, I have nibbled and sipped my way through calming cups of Ceylon tea and so many plates of such delectable morsels that I have lost count.

If I were alcohol-dependent, or an illegal drug user, I could find help almost anywhere. Try telling someone around here that you cannot pass up an afternoon dose of caffeine, sugar, and fat. In southern California, the idea of an afternoon splurge is to have a few crackers with their lettuce leaves. There's no one I can trust to talk to about my activity of choice. My calorie-conscious neighbors would be scandalized.

So, I tend my two lemon trees in my tiny pocket of a back-yard. I purchase cartons of butter and eggs from my local store, and spend my weekends cooking up curd. I spend too much money on teas with unpronounceable names, and I pace impatiently, waiting for the mail man to come to my door. I know, though, that one of these days, my pathetic attempts at home-made remedies will not suffice, and I will be forced to hit the streets in search of another "fix." I can only hope that my neighbors will all be at the gym, sweating off those lettuce leaves.

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In the Summer

Early morning by the Black Sea
Yields a moment to our French Press,
Some cheese biscuits and orange tea.
Later on the dock, winds caress
Our umbrella, you brew some chai
And we talk about sailing the coast—
And if it grows overcast we'll dry
In the cabin and drink some French roast.

—John D. Gosslee

A Morning Ritual

Fish eye bubbles compete for attention
and babbling, steaming purity
anxiously journeys to the ceramic prison.
The rising steam hisses at me urgently.

A silver spoon gently stirs with a flair.
Tiny tinkles create a symphony,
While orange spices permeate the air.
A morning ritual in perfect harmony.

To the couch we wander, me and my mug.
The warm, fluffy cocoon envelops me,
As I settle in, all cozy and snug,
To enjoy my first cup of tea.

—Cassandra Blomberg

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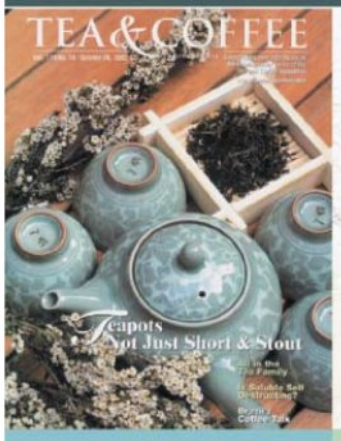

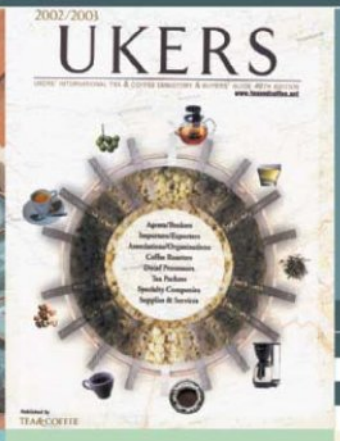

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Supplies & Services

* ***Buyers' Guide to Allied Industries***

Alphabetical listings by TYPE of supplies, services, machinery, and equipment offerings. Under each supply type listing are the companies that provide that supply or service.

2 SECTION

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3 SECTION

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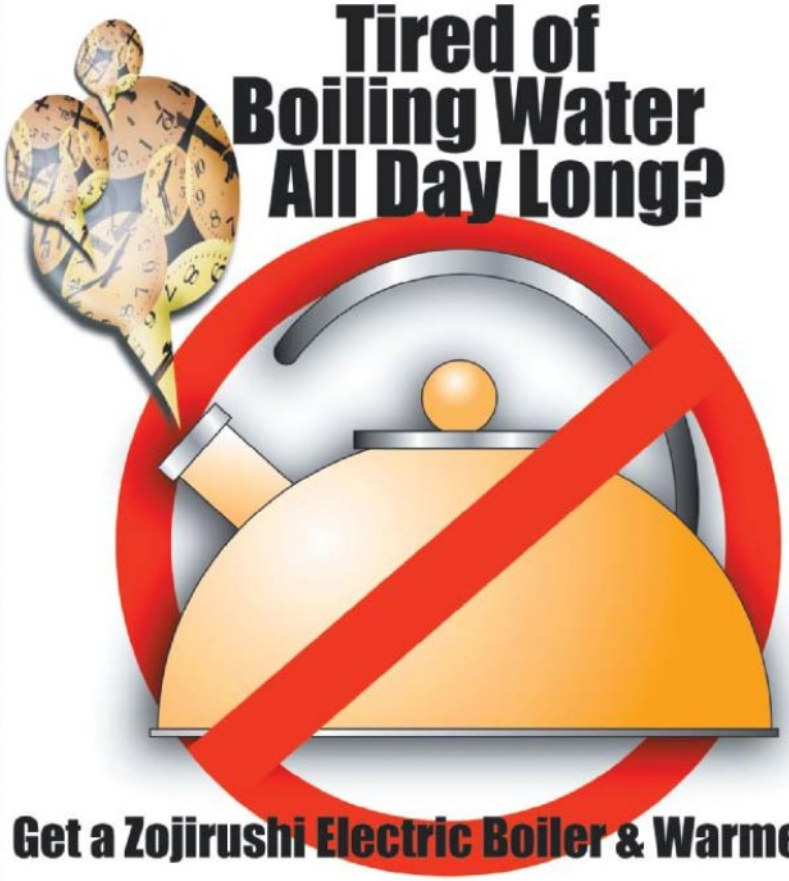

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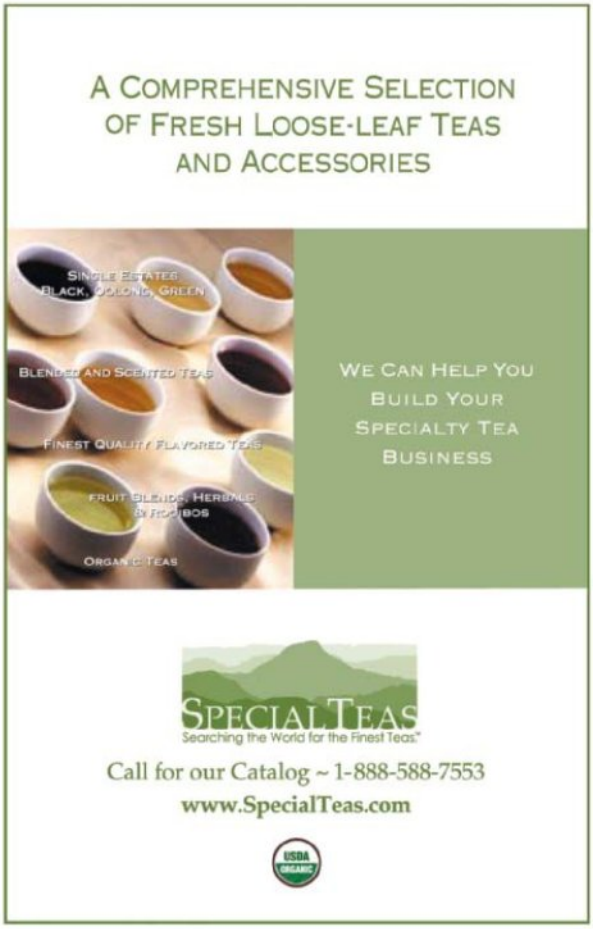
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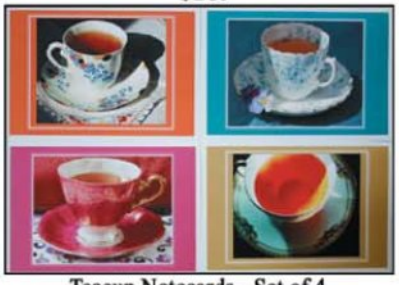

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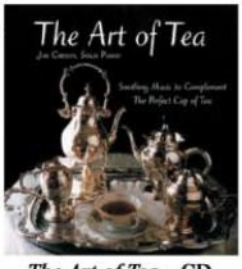

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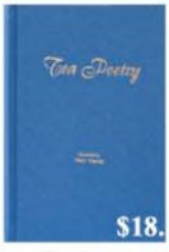

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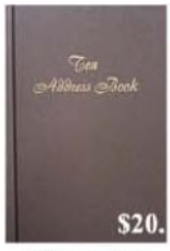

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